

**TESTIMONY**  
**of**  
**Edward J Bryan, II**  
**Before the Appropriations Committee**  
**of the**  
**Connecticut General Assembly**

**March 4, 2011**

Chairpersons Sen. Toni Harp and Rep. Toni Walker and Honorable Members of the Appropriations Committee my name is Ed Bryan. I am here today to submit this testimony **in support of the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program and ask that you please keep current line item funding levels maintained.**

Ten years ago, May eighth at 4:30 PM, my mother lost her battle with Alzheimer's. I should most likely restate the thought of it being a battle, as a battle implies a two sided fight of sorts. There was no possibility of my mother putting up any sort of fight. Alzheimer's, as I was to learn is not to be diminished or defeated in any sense of the terms. It is quite simply, a slow, undignified death. There is nothing to be done currently, other than to submit to its rigors, one day at a time. Come to find out, it is a fixed decline, dependent on the age at which you are diagnosed. The younger, the more quickly, it stops your ability to recognize loved ones, chew and swallow your food, and ultimately breathe on your own. The best anyone can do, is make you comfortable as you slowly perish. These people who are willing to provide this sort of care, we commonly refer to as caretakers.

They come in two basic iterations:

One is a person who is compensated to do so, by virtue of their vocation.

The other, is a person who chooses to do so as a result of their respect, loyalty and undying love of the afflicted person. Usually a spouse, brother, sister, son,

daughter or close relation. The burden of this responsibility is endless, 24/7 attempting to feed, changing diapers and toileting, bathing, feeding, safely containing and protecting.

All that we ask, is to maintain the respite program funding, as to allow these caretakers the possibility of a short break in providing this care. Adult Daycare or temporary full time care for a brief period, allows these angels the possibility of a break in this overwhelming responsibility!

If you remove the emotion from this equation, quite simply, this modest expense is actually a huge cost savings. If all of the Alzheimer's patients in question were to be committed to full time government programs, the financial impact that would fall upon all of us as taxpayers would be exponential in comparison!

Most caretakers cannot afford this alternate care without a financial grant from the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program.

Ultimately, almost all of the caretakers who dedicate themselves to caring for their loved ones, must give in to the demands of the disease and place those they so devoutly love and care for into "the system." They also save all of us as tax payers millions of dollars in full time care, by providing uncompensated care. As you have heard and will hear, Respite care is a cost effective way to delay nursing home care and its expense.

Thank you for listening to reasons the Alzheimer's Respite Care Program is truly a safety-net. If you have questions or concerns please contact me.

Ed Bryan

Easton, Connecticut